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CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

M.D. OF BRISTOL, MR. HURD OF FROME, & "MACHAON,"

ON THE

"FALSE" ASSUMPTION

OF

MEDICAL TITLES,

ADDRESSED TO

The Members of the Medical Profession,
and Registration Associations, &c.

BY

"MACHAON."

Frome :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE "JOURNAL" OFFICE, BATH STREET.

1860.

Fame Lovers

With Dr Harrison's
compliments to
Professor Keen.

CORRESPONDENCE, &c.

To the Editor of the Somerset and Wilts Journal.

SIR,—During the year 1859 and up to the present time the medical journals have teemed with articles, and letters of correspondents, expressing the indignation of the whole profession, on the assumption of medical titles by persons having no claim whatever to them. Such proceedings being quite a new feature in medical ethics, it has become the duty of all regularly-educated men, whose titles have been so unscrupulously assumed, to expose the deception wherever it presents itself.

About two months ago a medical practitioner of Frome announced, in all the local papers throughout Somerset and the adjoining counties, the *startling* fact that he had, just then, been admitted “a member of the Royal College of Surgeons,”—*startling*, because it was supposed that he had been a surgeon for many years past, from the circumstance of his having “*Surgeon*” on his door-plate, beneath his name. People, however, were ready to congratulate him on his *now* being really a surgeon; and nothing more would have been thought on the subject; but the gentleman disappeared for a fortnight, when, on his return, he announced that he had been to Edinburgh, obtained the degree of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, and had been made a Doctor; this was duly notified in the same manner as before, and it was believed by many of his friends, albeit much surprised as they naturally were at the facility with which doctors could be made. The gentleman then mounted a brass-plate on his door “Dr.,” and “Dr.” on his visiting cards.

The advertisement attracted the notice of a medical gentleman at Bristol, who wrote the following letter to the Editor of the *Somerset and Wilts Journal*. How “Machaon” was led into the correspondence will appear in the sequel.

To the Editor of the Somerset and Wilts Journal.

SIR,—Pray pardon my troubling you, but I accidentally took up a recent number of your *Journal*, wherein I read that a Mr. Hurd fancied he had obtained some honour by becoming a Licentiate of the College of Physicians in Edinburgh. I presume he is a medical man of your town or locality. Now it is but right it should be publicly known that some of the examining bodies in the medical profession, both in London and Edinburgh, have lately been playing fast and loose on this point, and would appear to have lost sight of the most precious element of their existence and charters, viz., public safety; for instead of insisting on the usual prolonged and prescribed curriculum of study, on the part of students or candidates, before admission to examinations for their diploma, the examiners have chosen, either from poverty or covetousness, or both, to waive such requirements, and to grant their license to uneducated men—men who *could not* have been submitted to the usual examinations in all branches, for the simple reason that they had never pursued the usual studies. In short, the examiners have been simply selling their diploma—a scandalous breach of trust—insulting to the regularly-educated man, injurious to the public, and pregnant with mischief. I beg to enclose an extract or two, which will show your readers (and they ought to be made acquainted with the facts) the feelings entertained by the respectable portion of the profession on the subject; and will also lead them to infer how doubtful must be the honour or advantage of being associated with universities or colleges, the heads of which betray such mercenary indifference to their own character or the public weal. I enclose my card,

And am, Sir, yours obediently,

Bristol, April 11th, 1860.

M.D.

From the Bath and Bristol Branch* the following protest, to the President and Council of the Royal College of Surgeons, was signed by 34 members of the college:—"We, the undersigned Fellows and Members of the Royal College

* Of the Registration Association.

of Surgeons of England, residing in the neighbourhood of Bath and Bristol, have read in the public press, with much dismay, that certain individuals have recently received the diploma of membership of your royal college, without passing through the curriculum of study or undergoing the ordinary examinations ; and thereby persons only half-educated have been admitted into the profession. We hereby protest most earnestly against such indulgence being shown to any persons as being an infringement on the rights and privileges of the members, and tending to lower the status of the profession and to nullify the salutary enactments of the medical act." At the quarterly meeting of the Midland Branch, held March 22nd, Dr. Hitchman, after denouncing the Edinburgh College for selling their diplomas, moved "That the recent proceedings of the Edinburgh College of Physicians *in the sale of their license, without examination*, to gentlemen not already physicians, was not called for to meet any want in the profession ; and that, inasmuch as it tends to lower the status of the physicians without elevating that of the general practitioner, it is calculated in every way to prove injurious to the profession." A memorial from the Hull Medical Registration Association, signed by 26 members, stated that the memorialists observed with regret that at a time when the most strenuous efforts are being made to raise the status of the medical profession of the United Kingdom, the Royal College of Surgeons of England should so far have neglected its duty as a guardian of the interests of the profession as to have admitted to the honour of its membership men who have not followed any regular course of medical education, and therefore respectfully requested the general council of medical education to exercise the powers vested in them, for the purpose of putting a stop to proceedings so calculated to lower the position of legally qualified medical practitioners.

[Although the subject to which the foregoing refers is somewhat removed from the ordinary sphere of the journalist, and embraces a discussion in which the medical profession are the best qualified judges, yet it possesses sufficient public interest to induce us to afford space for "M.D.'s" remarks, which of course are not intended to be personally offensive to any one particular gentleman, the name of our townsman being simply cited, we imagine, as an excuse for raising the question here. On all such ques-

tions there are invariably two sides, and we shall be quite open to a reply to "M.D." from any person interested in the question.—ED. S. & W. J.]

LETTER II.

SIR,—For the first time in my life, I am called on in the columns of a public paper, to notice a matter personal to myself. In your journal of last week, my *name* is introduced by an *anonymous* correspondent, who, if not in express terms, yet clearly, by implication, alleges that I am ignorant—uneducated—and incompetent to discharge efficiently the duties of my profession. At least this is the proposition which my name is made to support, and the conclusion deduced from it is, that public colleges, by granting me their diplomas, "have lost sight of the most precious element of their existence and characters, viz.: public safety; for instead of insisting on the usual prolonged and prescribed curriculum of study, on the part of students or candidates, before admission to examinations for their diploma, the examiners have chosen, either from poverty or covetousness, or both, to waive such requirements, and to grant their license to uneducated men, men who *could not* have been submitted to the usual examinations."

As to my "curriculum of study," it considerably exceeded the requirements both of the Society of Apothecaries, and of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

But whether the Council of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh were right or wrong in granting me *their* diploma, it is not for me to decide. I have only to state that it was not granted "*without examination*," which was both searching and protracted. In the first place I had to write papers on several important subjects. And secondly, a *viva voce* enquiry was made, on a variety of topics, by six gentlemen in succession, all of them strangers to me, even by name.

And, before admitting me to examination, they had certified evidence of my having cultivated a knowledge of my profession during a long series of years. First, for upwards of six years, as a resident pupil with a member of the Royal

College of Surgeons of England, in a large practice, affording peculiar opportunities for the acquisition of practical knowledge in medicine, surgery, and midwifery. Secondly, of my having been two years and a half at medical and surgical schools and hospitals in London. They had also written testimonials from practising physicians and surgeons, to whom I have been long known, including Dr. Symonds, of Clifton, Dr. Watson, George Norman, Esq., and T. R. Gore, Esq., of Bath.

And, lastly, they had evidence of my having honourably and sedulously practised in the profession of medicine nearly thirty years.

Whether the council were justified in considering all these circumstances as of equal value with their "usual prolonged and prescribed curriculum of study," which, I believe, is comprised in a residence of *three years* at Edinburgh, is their business and not mine. I only embraced the opportunity which their decision afforded me, and submitted to their examination.

However, in passing, I may remark that, when colleges adhere to their old restrictions, of an exclusive nature, they are denounced as mediæval and enemies to the republics of literature and science. But, as in the case under consideration, when they reject them as worthless and only enquire as to a man's knowledge, regardless of where—when—or how he acquired it, they are vilified as enemies to the "public safety!"

As to whether my admission to the rights and privileges of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh is a proof against the examiners of "a scandalous breach of trust—insulting to the regularly-educated man, injurious to the public, and pregnant with mischief," I leave public opinion to determine. It is not for me to decide a question which concerns either my professional competence or my ordinary knowledge. And under no circumstances could I stoop to rebut the insinuations and charges of ignorance and incapacity, which have been brought against me in your columns, by an anonymous slanderer, whose meanness can be estimated only by his malice.*

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Frome, May 2nd, 1860.

JAMES HURD.

* Rather strong language! and without any just reason.—MAC.

[We think that Mr. Hurd is wrong in regarding the letter of "M.D." as a malicious attack on himself, and in imagining that any implication of ignorance or incapacity is intended to be brought against him personally. Had we so regarded the letter, we should certainly have refused it insertion in our columns. As we have before stated, we considered Mr. Hurd's name to be introduced simply as a pretext for sending the letter to a *Frome* journal, and that M.D.'s strictures were directed against the system, by which he believed that, while many who were fully qualified, may receive well-merited honours, others not so qualified, would also be admitted to the same privileges.—ED. S. & W. J.]

It was now industriously circulated that M.D. of Bristol was none other than M.D. of Frome, which produced the following letter from "Machaon."

LETTER III.

SIR,—The extraordinary proceedings of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and the fact of their granting their license to any one being the possessor of a qualification from any other of the licensing corporations (the Apothecaries' Company for instance,) having caused much angry correspondence among the members of the medical profession throughout the country, the town of Frome not being excepted, perhaps a plain statement of some of the circumstances relating to the subject may have the effect of settling the question at issue, as between your correspondent "M.D." of Bristol, and a medical practitioner of Frome.

The public take but little interest in the affairs of the medical profession, it is probable, therefore, that but few are aware that an Act of parliament, called the Medical Act, was passed in 1858, wherein is a clause rendering it incumbent on all medical practitioners to register their names, at the same time stating their qualifications; and further, that practitioners not so registering their names, or assuming medical titles to which they have no claim, subjected themselves to severe penalties. Now this act was retrospective in its operation, and as, throughout England, many gentlemen were practising as surgeons who were not members of the college of Surgeons, many others practising as apothecaries, who, al-

though surgeons, had not a license from the Apothecaries' Company; the College of Surgeons, on their part, passed a bye-law that they would for one year (called the "year of grace,") admit all such gentlemen to the membership, provided that in each case the candidate should submit to a modified examination, *strictly practical*, and pay a fee of ten guineas. This step, I think, was a just and proper one, giving, as it did, the opportunity to those practitioners who required it, to place themselves in a right position; it was also just because it is very doubtful if (previous to the new act) any law existed to prevent *anyone* calling himself a surgeon, and because the act having a retrospective effect, pressed hard upon the old practitioners affected by it, many of them most worthy members of the profession. Of course many hundreds availed themselves of the bye-law, and the treasury of the College of Surgeons was greatly benefited thereby. Our friends, north of the Tweed, at the same time issued an advertisement that *they* were ready to supply DIPLOMAS, at ten pounds each, WITHOUT EXAMINATION, and the College of Physicians of Edinburgh passed a bye-law by a majority of one vote, which ran thus:

"For one year after the passing of these regulations, April 20, 1859, licentiates of any of the existing licensing boards—the Apothecaries' Company, for instance—may be admitted licentiates of the college, WITHOUT EXAMINATION, provided that they do not derive any profit from the sale of drugs or medicine, and that they produce certificates of character and professional qualification satisfactory to the college."

("The profits derived from the sale of medicines is not intended to imply medicines supplied to patients.) Now the above bye-law was in force until the 19th August following, during which time many hundreds obtained the license of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, when, in consequence of the remonstrances of the Royal College of Physicians of London, and expressions of disapprobation from the medical council appointed under the act of parliament, and the general indignation expressed by the profession, the College of Physicians of Edinburgh resolved as follows:

"That in accordance with the opinion expressed by the General Council of Medical Education and Registration, on the 8th of August, the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh do institute an examination in *practical medicine* to be undergone by candidates, other than university graduates,

claiming exemption under the charter of the college; and that the college agree to alter law 8 of the regulations for admission to the license, in accordance with the preceding resolution."

(The law No. 8 is the one admitting to the license without examination.) The above resolution is dated August 19th, 1859. It follows, therefore, that for four months of the year 1859, the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh were deliberately and undisguisedly *selling* their diplomas or licenses, for *ten pounds each, without any examination of the purchasers.*

Subsequently, as we are told by your Frome correspondent, they instituted in the place of no examination at all, "*a searching and protracted examination!*" I think, Sir, you will agree with me that this was a rather eccentric performance on the part of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh, who had been kind enough to add to their circular of invitation, "*In case of a candidate being unsuccessful at the examination, £8 of the fees will be returned to him, the sum of £2 being retained to meet the expense of the examination.*" It would be a curiosity to see a gentleman who had received back his £8 out of the ten pounds *paid into court*, as the lawyers have it, and that, too, after having travelled "so far north." Your Frome correspondent is under a great mistake in supposing that, previous to the year 1859, a three years' curriculum of study qualified for the license of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Such was not by any means the case. No one could obtain a license of that College, previous to the year 1859, who was not a graduate and Doctor of Medicine, as the following quotation from a letter of Professor Christison, of the UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, will clearly show. (Dr. Christison is one of the most celebrated Fellows of the College of Physicians,* and well known throughout Europe as an ornament to the profession.) In reply to a letter from a Doctor of Medicine, of Southampton, who had addressed the Professor on the subject of the proceedings of the Edinburgh College, Dr. Christison says—"Until a few weeks ago no such anomalous individual was known in Scotland at all, as an ungraduated licentiate of the College of Physicians." (Dated 16th June, 1859.)

Now, to obtain the degree of Doctor of Medicine in the

* And a Member of the General Council for carrying out the Medical Act of 1858.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, it is necessary to reside for four years in Edinburgh, in the case of a student not being already a surgeon, and three years when the student has acquired his diploma as a surgeon ; or two years at least at that University and two years (or one year, as the case may be) at some other university—Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin, or Paris, for instance ; then, after passing the examinations, which are really “searching and protracted,” he takes his degree. Such men only, or graduates of some other British University, *were* eligible to become Licentiates of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Such *was* the status of the college. Alas ! how rapid has been the progress downwards ! but it is well understood, as anyone would, *a priori*, be ready to expect from a college which numbers among its fellows men of such renown and honour, that the resolutions of April and August, 1859, were not adopted with unanimity ; on the contrary, the leading fellows have not themselves hesitated to stigmatise such things, so done in the bosom of their college, as disgraceful, and they strenuously opposed them.

The question naturally arises, what inducement can there be, to acquire an honour so equivocal as the license of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh ? I believe, and it is indeed a well-known fact, that many were under the impression that it would confer on them the title of M.D., which they have since found to be a delusion ; and many who had obtained it have repudiated the thing altogether ; others, finding that they had acted under a false impression, and being still ambitious to add M.D. to their names, have backed up their license by the purchase of a degree from a German or other foreign university, where such things are sold ; but, although the degree may flatter the vanity of its owner, it is of no use, as it cannot be registered.

“ Qui fit, Mæcenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem ”

* * * * *

“ Contentus vivat.”

I hope, Sir, the above explanation will satisfy both “ M.D.” of Bristol, and your Frome correspondent, and put an end to a discussion which cannot be agreeable to either of them.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

MACHAON.

Frome, 10th May, 1860.

LETTER IV.

SIR,—It is by no means agreeable to be entangled in a correspondence in which my name has been publicly used, and in which insinuation is adopted as the unmanly mode of prejudicing individual reputation, under the covert pretence of discussing a general question. But, agreeable or not, I cannot allow the letter signed “Machaon,” in your last number, to pass without notice.

The *venue* is now changed, and Frome is properly made the stage for its own performers. For, whether “M.D.” of *Bristol*, be regarded as the true Esculapius, and “Machaon” of Frome, as his son, as *fable* would lead us to suppose, it is clear that, if not identical, as every one here believes, they are near of kin as well as of a kindred spirit.

It was boldly asserted by “M.D.” that I had obtained the diploma of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh without examination. It is now proved, by his son “Machaon,” that this was not possible; but, unable to make the admission in a liberal spirit, he indulges in a sneering inuendo as to the nature and extent of the examination. I repeat my former statement, that it was a *bona fide* examination. Although I do not now regret this, if it will afford “Machaon’s” severe temper the least satisfaction, I confess, what I am sure he will as readily admit, that the question, “*bona fide*, or otherwise,” is not always agreeable to encounter.

A great deal is said by “Machaon” about the college fees, as though there was something new and strangely improper in having, on such occasions, to pay them. Will “Machaon” inform us whether *he* had to pay them, and, if so, whether he left that the payment of them in any way lessened the value of the diploma which admitted *him* to the privileges of the college? But what especially rouses the choler of “Machaon” is that fees, for diplomas, should be returned when the diplomas are not granted! I fear his sensitive temper will not be appeased when I inform him that he is wrong as to the amounts. Instead of ten guineas, for the diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, it is twenty-two pounds; and for that of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, it was twenty-five pounds, but, since the duty of £15 to the government has been remitted, it is only ten pounds, the sum which originally accrued to the college.

This reminds me of the ridiculous skit upon the late Mr. Cobbett, in the Rejected Addresses, where he is made to exclaim "I have not been within the doors of a playhouse before for these ten years, nor, till that abominable custom of taking money at the doors is discontinued, will I ever sanction a theatre with my presence."

"Machaon" says I am "under a great mistake in supposing that, previous to the year 1859, a three years' curriculum of study qualified for the license of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Such was not by any means the case—to obtain the degree of Doctor of Medicine in the UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, it is necessary to reside for four years in Edinburgh, in the case of a student not being already a surgeon, and three years when the student has acquired his diploma as a surgeon." Where, then, is the "great mistake?" I was speaking of my own case, and placed my own long career against the three years, previously required by the college, in defence of the council for the step they had taken in admitting me to an examination. Again, I ask, where is the mistake?

This question of superiority among doctors, is not so novel as "Machaon" supposes. About twenty-five years ago, a few physicians of Bristol, graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, determined not to meet those who had graduated at Edinburgh, inasmuch as the latter were taking fees, which the former considered derogatory to the profession. In some cases actually paying *two* visits in the city for one guinea; and, in some extreme cases, which were denounced as *low* conduct, and trenching on the interests of the apothecary, even making *three* visits for a guinea!

It was said, this may be all very well for this class of men and suitable for their position. They have GRADUATED at Edinburgh, in three *or* four years,—whilst we have undergone a much longer and more expensive classical education at Oxford or Cambridge,—and therefore we will not meet *such men* on equal terms!*

Thus, by some algebraical process, reducing *duration* to *size*, they computed that an English doctor was larger than a Scotch!

"Quanto delphinis balæna Britannica major."

This, be it remembered, was before the London College of

* This, I suppose, is intended as a compliment to the physicians of Bath and Bristol, who signed his certificate of character!

Physicians permitted graduates of Edinburgh to enter their body, hallowed, as it *then was*, by the prolonged and classical curriculum of Oxford and Cambridge.

“Such *was* the status of the college. Alas! how rapid has been the progress downwards!”

I quite agree in these melancholy words of “Machaon,” if he will only apply them to the *London*, instead of the Edinburgh College. For, we know that recently Edinburgh *graduates*, even without an examination, or the ordinary reading, in either Latin or Greek, have been admitted to that *once* exclusive and *learned* body.*

Surely, however *convenient*, it is most ungrateful in “Machaon” to *forget this*!

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Frome, May 14th, 1860.

JAMES HURD.

[For our correspondent's satisfaction we have no objection to say that “M.D.” and “Machaon” are not only not the same persons, but that each is entirely unaware who the other writer is.† Both are medical practitioners.—ED. S. & W. J.]

LETTER V.

SIR,—It is by no means unusual for persons who have not been successful in an attempt to beguile the public, to assume a tone of “injured innocence.” The artful style in which your Frome correspondent writes does not in any way affect the question under discussion, beyond its having evaded the object and cunningly misquoted my last letter, to serve a very unworthy purpose.

Your correspondent complains of his having been attacked personally; so far as I am concerned, such has not been the case; at all events, as yet. In fact, the only attack on his reputation has been made by himself in unblushingly assuming

* A gratuitous assertion from beginning to end. An Edinburgh graduate was President of the Royal College of Physicians of London in 1788. The great Harvey and Jenner were both graduates of Scotch Universities. Harvey was President of the Royal College of Physicians of London also.—MACHAON.

† Let me here explain that I never have known who M.D. of Bristol is, nor have I the slightest idea who he is up to the present hour.—MACHAON.

a title to which he has no right whatever ; and I feel it to be my duty, at this stage of the correspondence, to prove, which I shall to every one of ordinary understanding, that he has done so.

But first let me ask, did not your correspondent invite discussion, by advertising throughout the county his *great* achievement? Did he not, in his very questionable letter dated 5th May, make statements which he could not substantiate, and thereby challenge a reply? Did not his suggestion, which he has again so broadly repeated, that “ M.D., of Bristol,” and “ Machaon ” were identical, need a denial; his bombast, too, in advertising the names of gentlemen, without their permission, as having given him certificates of character—which of course they would do, there being no insurmountable objection—did not this step call for animadversion? I repeat, if the letter of “ M.D. of Bristol,” admitted being construed into a personal attack, your correspondent brought it upon himself. If he had not pushed himself wantonly before the public, he would have been left to “ *eat his penny cake in peace.*” It was, in fact, the system which has been attacked. The backslidings of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh, in so far prostituting the object of their charter as to deliberately sell their licenses to all who would purchase, WITHOUT EXAMINATION, during four months of the year 1859, and during the remaining eight months of the year 1859 virtually doing the same thing, although they had been driven to institute some sort of an examination, the extent of which was left to themselves, and which they advertised to be *practical* and limited to *two subjects*—two out of the eight or ten always examined upon by the Apothecaries’ Company of London—thus showing that it was merely a pretext for carrying on their traffic. This, however, is not the question at issue : the questions are, does your correspondent mean to state that by virtue of his license he has a right to assume the title of “ Doctor of Medicine?” Does he mean to say that he has taken a diploma from the University of Edinburgh? and will the Registrar-General under the Medical Act register his name as an M.D.?

I said your correspondent had misquoted and purposely and cunningly perverted the meaning of the whole of my letter. Let any one compare my letter and his quotations, and convince themselves of the perversion of the whole spirit

and meaning of my last letter ; such perversion having for its object to leave an impression that he is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, and that answers his query "Where then is *the* mistake?" He knows well that prior to last year neither three years nor thirty years' residence in Edinburgh could have given him a qualification for the license of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh, unless he had taken the degree of Doctor of Medicine. He knows also that the university has made no change in its curriculum in his or anybody else's favour, and all his talk about the three years formerly required for the license is merely to mystify and confound the University of Edinburgh with the College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and such have been the tactics of all these *soi-disant* doctors, of every shade of empiricism, who have obtained the license from that body during the year of grace (disgrace?)—in so far as they are concerned.

Your correspondent asks "Will 'Machaon' inform us whether *he* had to pay these fees when *he* was admitted to the privileges of *the* college." Very sly ! very ! What college, pray ? Neither "Machaon," as he knows, nor any other Englishman ever had anything to do with "*the* college." If "Machaon" had he would have taken the *fellowship to which he would have been entitled* ; but he would indeed be sorry to have his name in any way connected with the college of Physicians of Edinburgh, which is intended by "*the*" college, under existing circumstances. I say, no Englishman had anything to do with that licensing body, and for a cogent reason—the license of the Edinburgh College of Physicians did not give any right to practice medicine in England before last year, when it obtained a new charter, by which they were granted the privilege of licensing to practice medicine in all parts of Her Majesty's dominions, and a *pretty use they made of their new charter* ! Oh, no, Sir ; your correspondent knows very well that my position as an M.D. has nothing whatever to do with such a trumpery affair as the license of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, which gives no claim to such a title ; he knows very well, if he is right in his conjecture as to who "Machaon" is, that I am a Member of the Royal College of Physicians of London (and a graduated Doctor of Medicine), and if compatible with the dignity of that high institution, I might here have said a few words on your correspondent's fruitless attempt to degrade it by any comparison with the Edinburgh College of Physicians as it

now exists. I will merely suggest that, both collectively and individually, the College of Physicians of London holds a position far beyond the reach of any censure of your correspondent.

Again, your correspondent has perverted the meaning of a passage in my last letter, wherein I alluded to the very unlikely case of the £8, out of the £10 paid into court, being returned to the adventurous supporters of the traffic in licenses. No such thing, I venture to affirm, has taken place out of the thousand and more candidates for the *honour*—no one having been rejected. No, as I said before, such rejection was never contemplated by our “canny neighbours,” they wanted the money, and to reject was not the way to secure it! Why, Sir, if one applicant had been sent back, the whole herd would have taken alarm! and instead of 62 receiving the license in one day (sixty English and two Scotchmen), there would have been an end put to the whole speculation at once.

Let me now, Sir, call your attention to the main object of this letter, which is to prove to you and the public that persons such as your correspondent, who have procured the license of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, are not Doctors of Medicine—are not “Doctors” at all; and that in calling themselves by that title they are practising an imposition on the credulity of the public, that it is, in fact, an unmitigated sham.

First, then, bear in mind that the University of Edinburgh and the College of Physicians of Edinburgh are two distinct and separate bodies, having no control over, or connexion with, each other. The University alone can grant the degree of M.D. In fact, none but universities have that power, excepting in the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who has that privilege!

Now let us, for illustration, suppose a case—A gentleman who has practised as an apothecary for a score of years, goes off to Edinburgh with ten pounds in his pocket. I suppose on his arrival in Edinburgh, he has not on a sudden, by breathing the classic air of “the modern Athens,” become any more “a doctor” than he was when he left his quiet, peaceful home in an English country town. Well, he now spends his ten pounds and procures a license to practise medicine, from a college of physicians, he now flatters himself as being indeed “a doctor,” and tells the world so; but let us see what that body which gave him his license says through its secretary, Dr. Haldane. Your correspondent says he is, it says he is not a Doctor.

[FROM DR. HALDANE.]

Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, July 9th, 1859.

SIR,—I am favoured with yours of the 8th instant. This college does not profess to confer the title of "Doctor," neither does it authorise its licentiates to assume it. If licentiates of this or any other college of physicians call themselves "Doctors," they do so upon their own responsibilities.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
D. R. HALDANE, Secretary.

[FROM DR. HALDANE.]

Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, 4th April, 1860.

DEAR SIR,—The license of this college does not confer the title of M.D. or of Doctor of Medicine. Licentiates are sometimes styled "Doctor" by courtesy.

Yours truly,
D. R. HALDANE, Secretary.

[FROM PROFESSOR CHRISTISON, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
EDINBURGH.]

Edinburgh, June 16th, 1859.

SIR,—In answer to your letter of the 9th, I beg to inform you that I am not aware of any right, either in law or in courtesy, by which a Licentiate of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh can call himself "Doctor," unless he is also a graduate of an university. You are well enough aware of a usage in society, according to which almost any medical man is familiarly spoken of and addressed by unprofessional persons as "Doctor." You know also that the Medical Act of last year does not prevent a man calling himself a "Doctor," provided he does not call himself a "*Doctor of Medicine*," because any one can do the same, even a low quack. In Scotland there is neither law nor courtesy to support the pretensions of an Ungraduated Licentiate of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, to be called or to call himself in any formal way, as for example, on his door-plate, or on his announcing himself on going into company, "Doctor." The simple reason is, that until a few weeks ago no such anomalous individual was known in Scotland at all, as an Ungraduated Licentiate of the College of Physicians. The licentiates have no right to call themselves doctors in England, having no such right in Scotland.

Your most obedient servant,
R. CHRISTISON.

[FROM THE SECRETARY OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY.]

University of Edinburgh, 31st May, 1860.

SIR,—In reply to your letter, I have to inform you that no person bearing the name of James Hurd, has, during the last six years,

graduated in medicine at the University of Edinburgh. Licentiates of the Royal College of Physicians are not recognised as Doctors of Medicine by the University of Edinburgh.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. SMITH, Secretary.

[FROM THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL UNDER THE MEDICAL ACT.]

I do not designate a Licentiate, as above described, as M.D. in the Register. In letters and receipts sent from this office, no person shall be addressed as Doctor, who has not taken the degree of M.D.

In Dr. Christison's letter the fact is noticed that any person may call himself a doctor, provided he does not call himself a Doctor of Medicine; and it will also be observed that your correspondent has not yet had the presumption to put "M.D." after his name; and therefore the simple question arises whether he calls himself Doctor of Medicine or not.

And now, Sir, I should like to know "by what mighty magic, by what conjuration," such an individual as alluded to above has in one fortnight, been metamorphosised from his original state into a DOCTOR OF MEDICINE? The whole proceeding is absurd in the extreme, and well might the world exclaim "how has this been done?" the answer is simple, it has not been done at all! It is either a delusion or a deception—if the former, why the poor man is to be pitied—if the latter, how does such conduct comport with that respectability which the public expect to find in a medical practitioner?

What your correspondent means to imply in referring to the Royal College of Physicians in London, by "it is convenient for 'Machaon' to forget this," I am at a loss to understand. I shall simply say that there is no connexion existing between myself and the Royal College of Physicians in London "convenient for me to forget;" and if he had been subjected to the ordeal of five consecutive days' examination before that learned body, three days, from ten a.m. until four p.m., PAPERS, and two subsequent days *viva voce*, and had paid 50 guineas fees for that delcctable pastime, he would not readily have forgotten it either, but would have been taught a lesson not to prate about a "searching and protracted examination" instituted by the College of Physicians of Edinburgh, in the latter eight months of the year of grace, in lieu of no examination at all during the former four months of that year.

Your correspondent was facetious at the expense of poor old Eseulapius and his son Machaon, of whom he says he has read "*in fable*." Now if he is fond of that sort of reading, he may find a very interesting "*fable*" of old Æsop's, namely, the "JACKDAW AND THE PEACOCKS,"* and having read it, and having well-digested its application, summon up moral courage enough to take the brazen plate from off his door, and having restored it to its pristine beauty and veracity, live contented in his legitimate sphere.

Sir, I cannot occupy more of your space, and should there be occasion for a reply to any further communication from your correspondent, I shall avail myself of a *rèsumé* of the whole correspondence, which I shall probably publish for the perusal of the medical profession generally, and the Medical Registration Societies in particular.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
 Frome, June 7th, 1860. MACHAON.

LETTER VI.

SIR,—In taking leave of "Machaon," by briefly noticing his last communication, I have no intention of enlarging on his ungentlemanly language, or the vulgar impertinence of his personal allusions; much less shall I attempt to rival him in these characteristic particulars, because I would much rather forego the courtesy title of "Doctor," than forfeit my right to be considered a gentleman.

I shall confine myself to the only question which is raised by this correspondence. The alleged pretence for it was that the College of Physicians of Edinburgh had introduced a new order of things, by admitting to examination for their diploma "other than university graduates."

This liberality, so agreeable to the spirit of the age, called forth the hostility of those who, wedded to the past, see nothing but danger in modern innovation.† To some of these

* "Tumens inani graeulus superbia
 Pennas Pavoni quæ deciderant, sustulit
 Seque exornavit: deinde contemnens suos
 Formoso se pavonum immiscuit gregi."

† This is "coming out" for a Conservative!

who had been most conspicuous in their opposition to the new regulation, "Machaon" writes to ascertain the *status* of licentiates under its adoption. Of course their replies are in unison with their preconceived opinions, and suitable for "Machaon's" purpose, and forthwith he publishes them. But, before doing so, with a want of courtesy characteristic of the man, they were *privately* and industriously circulated where it was hoped they might silently prejudice my interest.

Now, whatever repugnance such men as Dr. Christison may have to the bye-law of 1859, under which I became a licentiate, it is clear that no opinion founded on previous custom and usage, can be of force contemporaneously with its adoption by the college. But, whatever respect even the prejudices of such men may be entitled to, the bitter hostility of "Machaon" is simply ridiculous. He has risen from the ranks of the profession, was a surgeon from 1821 to 1834, in which year he graduated at Edinburgh, and then, as late as 1841, like me, substituting London for Edinburgh, became, by examination, a licentiate of a college of physicians.

Oh! but he, who abhors college fees, and repudiates examinations, which others undergo, had to pay £50, and was examined during five days! Well, without any deduction for this rodomontade, I was examined one day and paid £10, so that arithmetically, we have been treated alike.

The question, what constitutes a man an "M.D.," is simple enough, and need not have caused "Machaon" the great trouble he has taken. It is purely an academical degree, the same as "M.A.," and obtained only at universities which, by charter, have the privilege of granting it. There are only two exceptions to this rule, the College of Durham and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the power of the primate, however, seems compromised by the recent medical act, but it existed, and was exercised, as late as the reign of George III., in favour of Mr. Willis for his attendance on the King.*

Not only does the degree of "M.D.," when obtained at Oxford or Cambridge, give its possessor the right of "prescribing in medicine," but even the degree of "M.B.," or of "M.A.," of these two universities, if accompanied by their license "*ad practicandum in medicinâ*," confers the same privilege, so that most of our clergy could be easily metamorphosed into "M.D.s;" but would the public have confidence in them as physicians?

* See Appendix, Note II.

The degree, then, of "M.D.," takes cognizance of the *educational* status, rather than of the *professional* attainments, consequently, although it confers the privilege of practising in medicine, the "M.D." seeks admission into some college of physicians by an examination of a more professional and practical nature, before he can secure either the confidence of his fellows or of the public. He thus, in fact, really becomes a *physician*; so that the case is not over-stated by the paradox, a man is an "M.D." without being a physician, and may be a physician without being an "M.D."*

I figure in the last category, and am, in the same manner, and to the same extent, a licentiate of a college of physicians, as I should be if I had graduated at some university; but, not having so graduated, I am not an "M.D."†

How, then, is a person so circumstanced to be designated? Surely those who act according to the dictates of courtesy and propriety will scarcely call a physician "Mr.;" and, that a person admitted into a college of physicians, and assured by diploma all its rights and privileges, is a physician, and can be degraded into nothing less, no right-minded man will question: and that such bodies have the power of judging how, and on whom, they will confer their diploma, is equally certain. It is, therefore, no forced conclusion that courtesy must extend to such an one the title of "Doctor."

I shall not enlarge upon the want of courtesy, and even of common charity, in "Machaon" having singled me out for attack, nor on his want of manliness in writing under a feigned name. Surely he is the last man who ought to indulge his spleen in written abuse, and depreciation of his neighbours, having himself smarted under an attack for which he sought redress in a court of law.

I do not seek the protection of a jury, for I am assured on all sides, of the kindly feelings of my neighbours, who have so numerously expressed their sympathy at the cowardly and unjust treatment I have received from "Machaon," and his Bristol ally, as to render the occasion one of congratulation rather than annoyance.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES HURD.

Frome, June 13th.

* See Appendix, Note VII.

† See Appendix, Note VI.

MACHAON'S REPLY.

It is quite evident that when the above letter was written its author was in a very bad temper, and that his mind must have been in a very unsettled state; and perhaps it may be inferred that he was scarcely accountable for the strong expressions of which he has made use. He, however, admits *now* that he is not a *Doctor of Medicine*, "*because he never graduated!*" Well, then, as he is not a Doctor of Medicine, and has "Dr." on his door-plate, what is he a doctor of? Is he D.D., L.L.D., D.C.L., Ph.D., or is he a Doctor of Music? If he enjoys the last title, I can only say his expressions are very *inharmonious*. Your correspondent observes "I would rather give up my *courtesy* title of doctor than the right to be considered a gentleman." Well he can take his choice, the alternative is open to him; but he might have substituted "*feigned title*," for *courtesy* title.

As to the courtesy part of the question, let us see how far this is borne out, and how far your correspondent can claim it. I have before shown that there does not, nor ever did exist, such *courtesy* in Scotland; but see the following letters on the subject, both as regards Scotland and England, together with a decree of the Royal College of Physicians of London, issued in order to put an end to this claim to be called doctor by *courtesy*, even amongst a higher class of men, of which the Licentiates of the London College consist.

First, then, as to the Edinburgh College of Physicians, I quote two recent letters, one from its secretary and the other from Dr. Christison, one of the most distinguished fellows of the college and a member of the council appointed to carry into effect the new Medical Act.

"Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 25th instant. This college has never encouraged or authorised its licentiates to assume any other title than that of Licentiate of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Should any irregular assumption of medical titles have taken place, a registration association appears to be a very suitable body to take the matter up.

I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

D. R. HALDANE, Secretary."

The above was in answer to a letter from a gentleman at Portsea, who has published a pamphlet on the subject, which is quite at your correspondent's service, if he wishes for some very clear information relative to his pretensions. An extract from it may here be appropriately given.

"It is a singular fact, that in perusing the list of licentiates admitted between the 26th of April and the 1st of December, in all 415, there are very few indeed whose address is not in some part of England, and that more than fifty per cent. already possessed the license of the Apothecaries' Company! Many, therefore, must have applied for this license to practise who did not require it, having some further object in view. The totally different position of the Edinburgh College of Physicians as compared with the London College, was probably unknown to many of them. The former body possesses no exclusive privileges, and has never admitted, till April, 1859, even as a licentiate, any one but a university graduate. And no shadow of a local custom existed to warrant the idea that its licentiates, under its new regulations, were receiving anything but a simple license to practise medicine. Those, therefore, who took the license, with the idea that such license, by custom or courtesy, gave them any further claim *than they already possessed*, to style themselves 'Dr.' publicly, or to be styled so by others familiarly, committed a very sad though, perhaps, in some cases, a willing mistake. To prove this, there is the following reply from Dr. Christison, of Edinburgh, a Fellow of the College, a Member of the General Council under the Medical Act, and President of the the Scottish Registration Association, to a letter addressed to him:—

'Edinburgh, 14th April, 1860.

DEAR SIR,—I was absent from town all yesterday, and therefore have been unable to answer your letter sooner. You are probably aware that as a Fellow of the College of Physicians I resisted with all the means in my power, but unsuccessfully, the regulations which founded the new license of that college for professional men not Doctors of Medicine. I am afraid I have exhausted all my power and influence in the matter. But I shall communicate your letter to the Secretary, complain of the practices you mention, and ask whether the college will put them down by some distinct uncompromising resolution.

It is my persuasion that the members of the college who carried the new license, have no desire that the licentiates, who are not graduates, should follow any practice calculated to make them pass for such with the public. But I think it is the bounden duty of the college to declare that all practices of the sort are unlawful, and contrary to the intention of the college, when the 'license to practise medicine,' and nothing more, was granted.

The license is now a totally different thing from what it was. It is a mere qualification to practise physic, as contra-distinguished from surgery. Formerly it was an entrance which doctors of medicine could alone take advantage of, and a mere step to the fellowship, and for many years it had been abandoned in favour of a direct admission to that higher title; so that there was not last year at this time a single licentiate on the roll of the college.

No such thing was ever known in Scotland as a practitioner door-plating, or eard-calling, himself Doctor, who was not either a university graduate or a downright quack. So it is now in Scotland. So it ought to be in England. As for any one but a University Doctor of Medicine putting M.D. to his name,—that is a simple falsehood.

I am, yours faithfully,

R. CHRISTISON.'"

Thus it is made evident that in Scotland the license, as granted during the year of grace, grants no new privileges to those who have received it. The whole truth is that by their new charter they obtained the right to qualify for the practise of medicine in all parts of her Majesty's dominions, a right the Apothecaries' Company always had since 1815, and the new license was established in opposition to the Apothecaries' Company. That such was the case I quote the following extract from a Fellow of the Edinburgh College, who was favourable to the project.

"I venture to anticipate, as the result of this movement, the speedy liberation of the general practitioner of England from the trammels of the Apothecaries' Company. In Scotland every pure physician has ready access to the fellowship of the college, and where, therefore, the license has *no meaning and object*, if it be not a license for the *family medical attendant*.—(Signed) A FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, EDINBURGH.

But as has been observed by a recent author on the subject,

"It is evident that the familiar, popular, and colloquial designation of doctor, as applied to a medical attendant, is not to be confounded with the open assumption of such a title, with the intention of claiming an undue advantage in the eyes of the public over those who do not claim it."

So much then for the Edinburgh College and *its courtesy* towards those who have procured its license, and let us now refer to the London College of Physicians, which has, and always had, privileges not possessed by any other College of Physicians.

About a month ago there appeared in the *Frome Times* something like the following, it appeared in the part of the paper which is printed in London; of course *it was not* sent from Frome for that purpose? Why should it? "The Royal College of Physicians of London have at length determined upon granting *their* license to general practitioners."

Now, as a member of the London College, I beg to contradict this statement. It is true that the college contemplate granting a license to practise medicine as general practitioners, to gentlemen, instead of obliging them to go to the Apothecaries' Company for a license, and under the following circumstances and conditions.

Previous to the passing of the Apothecaries' Act in 1815, the Royal College of Physicians of London, by their charter (of Henry VIII.), had the privilege of granting licenses to practice medicine to gentlemen about to enter upon practice as apothecaries; but as the license was not compulsory, it was seldom applied for, so that it became necessary to pass an Act of Parliament to *oblige* all persons about to practice to appear before the Apothecaries' Company for examination as to their fitness to practice medicine. The Royal College of Physicians then *gave* up their privilege to the Apothecaries' Company, it is about to resume that privilege, and thus give gentlemen the choice of taking a license from it, or from the Apothecaries' Company, at their discretion and under the conditions following. It is declared positively—

“The London College of Physicians will not *allow* such licentiates to assume the title of doctor unless they possess a degree. If any of the proposed class of new licentiates assume the title, not possessing it, or call themselves physicians, he subjects himself to the penalty of being discarded from the college, and deprived of his license.”

It is believed that the College of Physicians of Edinburgh will see the error they have committed, and issue a straightforward declaration, in addition to their denying the right to assume Dr. by those who have procured its license.*

Your correspondent still persists in instituting a comparison between the London and Edinburgh licentiates. There is not the slightest analogy. If a Fellow, Member, or Licentiate of the London College of Physicians, *although an M.D.*, were to put Dr. on his door, before his name, and at the same time *practice as an apothecary*, and dispense medicines to his patients, he would, *ipso facto*, lose his status in the college and be deprived of his license, such is the case and was always the case. So that in England, supposing a person to be *really a physician*, he at once ceases to be a physician if he practices as an apothecary; but the license granted by the College of Physicians of Edinburgh is nothing more than an equivalent to the license of the *Apothecaries'*

* See Appendix Note V.

Company, nor does that college profess to estimate it as being anything else. It is just what the College of Physicians of London contemplate granting to future general practitioners, and nothing more nor less. But the London College of Physicians have taken steps to prevent such licentiates from calling themselves doctors.

"Surely," says your correspondent, "those who act according to the dictates of *courtesy* and *propriety* will scarcely call a physician Mr.," &c. This is "begging the question," he is not a physician; but if he were, does the *courtesy*, or *indulgence*, or *favour*, or *compliment*, or *kindness* (synonymous terms) shown by friends, entitle a man to the self-complacency of calling *himself* "*doctor*," and door-plating *himself* "*doctor*," when he knows well he is not anything of the sort? The very idea is an entire absurdity.

Your correspondent alludes to "Machæon" having risen from the ranks of the profession, it is quite true, even *from the apothecaries' certificate*. I hope this is not set forth as being anything unworthy of "Machæon's" *present status*.

Your correspondent having received a license from the College of Physicians of Edinburgh to practise medicine, which could be obtained by any one with the certificate of the Apothecaries' Company, without examination during four months of last year, asks "if he is not to be called doctor, what is he to be called?" I do not think there would be any difficulty in substituting, a far more appropriate designation; one *less* appropriate at all events could not be found, for it states that which is not a fact. I entirely agree with the conclusions arrived at by the writer of the pamphlet already referred to, and adopt them as my own.

"Thus it has been shown *first* that universities alone, with the one exception quoted, have the power of granting degrees, and that the prefix of "Dr." to a name implies that the bearer is D.D., L.L.D., M.D., or Mus. D. of a university.

"Secondly,—That colleges of physicians or apothecaries' companies in granting a license to practise medicine, have not the power to confer the degree of M.D. or its synonym, and do not pretend to do so. And though the Licentiates of the College of Physicians of London, without a degree, were by courtesy styled "Dr." by the public, that courtesy is now officially withdrawn. But no such license existed in the Edinburgh College, no such courtesy has existed in Scotland, and in that country the assumption of such title is considered empirical.

"Thirdly,—Hence it follows that the improper use that has

been made of the License of the Edinburgh College in England, the desire of the college to place it on its true footing, and the unlimited extension of the irregularity under existing circumstances require the interference of the universities, of the licensing bodies, of registration associations, and the profession at large. It is quite clear that the Royal College of Physicians of London, having taken decided steps to prevent their projected new class of licentiates following the example of others in calling themselves doctors and physicians, under the penalty of being deprived of the license, have distinctly expressed their opinion that those who have done so on the strength of a license obtained from the Edinburgh College, have taken an unjustifiable liberty with the title of the really qualified physician.

Fourthly,—If any licentiates have a right, without a degree, to assume the title of “Dr.,” the same right must be conceded to Licentiates of the Apothecaries’ Company.”

And now, Sir, I think that after perusing the correspondence, no man, who sincerely wishes to arrive at the truth in reference to the right or propriety of anyone to call himself Doctor under the circumstances therein set forth, need seek further enlightenment.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

FROME, JUNE 21, 1860.

MACHAON.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I. [See page 9.]

In the first advertisement of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh it was announced that the license would be granted—without examination—to *first*, gentlemen who have been fifteen years in actual practice, without any qualification; *second*, to licentiates of any of the existing bodies, Apothecaries Company for instance. The first resolution, however, they were obliged to withdraw, and the college had immediately to retire from its position. So they issued a letter, from which the following is an extract:—

“The college has, in the first place, to express its extreme regret, that owing to an inadvertance and precipitancy, the causes of which it is unnecessary to enter into, the new regulations of the college respecting licentiates were made public before having been duly considered, according to practice, and when they contained articles in a shape which may have been distasteful to the London College

of Physicians. Since this premature publication the regulations have undergone revision, according to law, at three separate meetings, at which the following alterations have been made :—

‘3. During the year of admission of licentiates without examination, *and without a university degree*, no one will be admitted without a license from some other medical corporation ; and persons in practice for fifteen years without any license, who were admitted under the original resolutions, will not be allowed to apply for the licence of the college at all.’

And it was well the college did so alter the rule, or it would have had the Holloways, Morrisons, Le Mert’s, &c., enrolled amongst its licentiates. Even under the *quasi examination* they have given their license to some very queer people: for instance, “one gentleman procured the license in February last, and in the May following petitioned a bankruptcy court as a *druggist* !” He was a “*doctor by courtesy*” I suppose !!

In the case of *Giles v. Talbot*, before Mr. Selfe, the police magistrate, about a month since, when the defendant was summoned for having Dr. on his door-plate, to which he had far more right than your correspondent had, for he really was a *doctor*—D.C.L.—his defence was so very like the usual course taken by gentlemen of similar pretensions, that I give it here as reported :—“The defendant, who was a medical practitioner, addressed the magistrate, or rather the *people in court*, at great length, in a most animated and impassioned strain. He said the name of Dr. Talbot was over his door, and there it should remain as long as he lived : there was no power on earth could remove it ! He was advised by a barrister, to whom he had paid a fee of two guineas, that he had a right to the title of *doctor*, and to place it over his door. He had *three* doctorates ! He charged the plaintiff and other medical practitioners with being actuated by motives of *craft, malignity, envy, and aulacity*, in this prosecution. He attained the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Hesse, in Germany, after *hard fagging* in Latin, Hebrew, Greek, and mathematics, and the composition of a prize poem. He passed his examination before *five* of the most eminent men in Europe, &c.”* Mr. Selfe said no doubt any one could call himself doctor, but it was evident that by calling himself Dr., dispensing medicine, and giving advice, he clearly intended to represent himself as being a *Doctor of Medicine*, and he was fined £10 accordingly.

NOTE II. [See page 21.

“It is true that till the passing of the Medical Act, the Archbishop of Canterbury had the privilege of conferring that degree, and a few names accordingly appear in the register with that distinctive title. But if His Grace still possesses the privilege of

* Behold the picture ! is it like ?—like whom ?

granting the degree, such degree, if conferred since the passing of the Act, is not allowed to be registered. This privilege, which appears so strange to us, has survived the period when no one could act as a physician in any part of England without the license of the Bishop of the Diocese in which he practised! This episcopal jurisdiction only terminated in the reign of Henry VIII., by whom the Charter was granted which deligated important privileges to the College of Physicians of London.

"By that Charter the College was empowered to prevent any one from practising as a physician in London, or within seven miles, without its license. Hence arose the two grades of its licentiates and extra-licentiates, the former empowered to practise in London, and the latter on easier terms *extra urbem*. Among those licentiates were some who had no university degree. But the college having the monopoly of the license to practice physic, and the power to prosecute those who evaded their authority, granted their license, or extra license more particularly, to a limited number of practitioners of whose qualifications they satisfied themselves. To such Licentiates of the London College, who were practising as physicians, the public applied the title of "Dr.," and the profession up to a certain period did not interfere. This, however, is no longer sanctioned by the London College of Physicians.

NOTE III. [See page 13.]

As your correspondent does not seem clearly to understand the difference between taking the degree of M.D. in the University of Edinburgh and the license of the College of Physicians, I will inform him:—First, then, supposing the student to be already a surgeon, he must matriculate at the university for three years, during which time—in addition to his general studies—he *must attend* the lectures of all the professors in medicine, most of the courses of the lectures being of four months' duration—and several of them he must attend for two courses. The professors in medicine to be attended are on anatomy, physiology, pathology, chemistry and practical chemistry, practice of medicine, obstetrics, botany, *materia medica*, therapeutics, natural philosophy, surgery and practical surgery, medical jurisprudence, &c., and one year physician's practice at the Edinburgh Infirmary; then he is qualified for his first examination. The second takes place about two months after, he then has to write a thesis on a medical subject, which he has to "defend," he then, in due time, takes his degree; all this your correspondent wishes it to be understood had been waived in his *particular case*, his great acquirements being considered as an equivalent! What next, I wonder? The above will, I should think, convince any one of the absurdity of the assertion of the simple method of converting M.A. and B.A. into M.D., at all events in so far as graduates of the University of Edinburgh

are concerned. His method of making a doctor is far more simple than any other. First, procure a license from the College of Physicians of Edinburgh, then stick up a door-plate with Dr., the thing is done! and all in a fortnight. Who would think of spending three or four years as an undergraduate of a university? and that too having already been for ten years "in the ranks of the profession." What this last term means your correspondent best knows.

NOTE IV. [See page 22.]

I do not deny the right of anyone to purchase a license from a College of Physicians, any more than I should dispute his *right* to buy a *horse*; but I do dispute, and entirely deny the right of anyone to call himself *doctor* on the strength of his having procured a license to practise medicine from the Edinburgh College of Physicians, or from any other college of physicians, more especially when practising as an apothecary! And I deny that the intention of the Edinburgh College was to give the right to be called a physician. The license is to practice medicine, and of no more purport than the license of the *Apothecaries Company*, all the sophistry and casuistry of vain pretenders notwithstanding.

NOTE V. [See page 26.]

There are few *doctors of medicine* even, who ever dream of putting "Dr." on their doors during the time they practice as "*general practitioners*," although they might do so if they thought proper, but they wisely, to prevent confusion, put their doctorate by until they relinquish general practice, and practise as *physicians*. But here is *reality*! not so with self-called doctors, really with no claim to the distinction which they wish to assume over their fellow practitioners, in any way whatever, far from it in this instance.

NOTE VI. [See page 22.]

Oh! so he is not an M.D. Then why did he say he was? * With what an *air* of frankness and openness the fact is now admitted. Now your correspondent is a *doctor by courtesy*. A most convenient word this word *courtesy*! but the simple question is, is your correspondent a doctor or is he not? He at length acknowledges that he is not a *doctor*, and yet has the *courtesy towards himself* to state on his door-plate that *he is a doctor*! There are *captains too, by courtesy*, perhaps the master of a fishing smack is one! and in Ireland you may see, I have heard, of "timber and fruit merchant" being over the door of a person who sells *potatoes and firewood*. This is, of course a merchant by courtesy, in fact *courtesy* of this sort may be carried to an amazing extent. For illustration, take the following dialogue from "Monte-Christo."

"Mais il a diné avec M. Andrea Cavelcanti."

"Votre Prince Italien?"

* See page 13.

"N'exagérons pas, M. Andrea se donne seulement le titre de Vicomte."

"Se donne dites vous?"

"Je dis, se donne."

"Il ne l'est pas donc?"

"Eh! le sais-je, moi? Il se le donne, on le lui donne; n'est-ce pas comme s'il l'avait?"

NOTE VII. [See page 22.]

Now, Sir, this is all very specious and plausible argument, supposing the premises to be true, but I shall show that they are not, and that your correspondent is not either doctor or physician as he states himself to be, and that he *figures* in neither category as he says he does.

NOTE VIII.

As throwing some light on the legal points of the question, I quote the following letter from the *Medical Times*, June 16th:—

"To the Editor of the *Medical Times and Gazette*."

SIR,—What constitutes a Physician? at present occupies much of public attention, and frequently forms the subject of discussion. Considerable light has been incidentally thrown upon this question during some remarks made by the Barons of Exchequer last Saturday, when delivering judgment in the celebrated case *Swinfen versus Lord Chelmsford*. On that occasion the Court observed, 'We think a barrister is to be considered not as making a contract with his client, but as taking upon himself an office or duty, in the proper discharge of which, not merely the client, but the Court, and the public at large have an interest.' Having previously remarked that former judges, when deciding other cases respecting the rights of barristers, often alluded to the 'analogous profession of physicians;' consequently, no member of that faculty ought to make a contract regarding fees for any professional aid he may render, since by so doing he would be following a trade, instead of discharging an office or duty, the proper function of a physician, as strictly interpreted by high legal tribunals. Hence, should any medical practitioners charge, and still more if he sues, either for medicines supplied or advice rendered, the party thereby ceases to be a physician; in fact, then becomes a tradesman, according to legal phraseology and the *obiter dicta* of judges. Therefore, it inevitably follows, whoever contracts to attend a patient medically, or vends drugs, and so takes upon himself anything else than an office or duty, cannot be designated, a physician. On that point no doubts prevail in forensic minds, whatever some medical casuists may have confidently asserted heretofore; and especially seeing the axiom enunciated even so early as the days of Linaere decidedly states '*Ni quis medicus medicamenta aut fiat aut venderat*,'—there cannot surely be now any mistake. I am, &c., MEDICO-LEGIST.—June 11."

